--CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of copending application Serial No. 09/633,431, filed on August 7, 2000, now U.S. Patent No. _____, which is a continuation of copending application Serial No. 09/399,667, filed on September 21, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,127,542, which is a continuation of application Serial No. 09/133,078, filed on August 12, 1998, now U.S. Patent No. 6,025,494, which is a divisional of application Serial No. 08/669,389, filed on July 16, 1996, now U.S. Patent No. 5,859,006.--

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-17, inclusive, without prejudice.

Add new claims 18-20 as follows:

--18. A method of elevating cGMP levels in a human or nonhuman animal body, which comprises administering to said body a therapeutically effective amount of a compound having a formula

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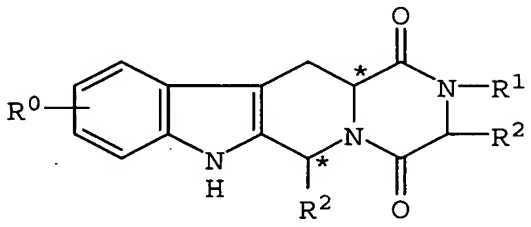
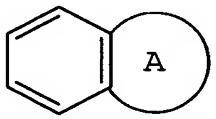


or salts or solvates thereof, in which:

R^0 represents hydrogen, halogen, or C_{1-6}alkyl;

R^1 represents hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-8}cycloalkyl, C_{3-8}cycloalkylC_{1-3}-alkyl, arylC_{1-3}alkyl, wherein aryl is phenyl or phenyl substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, methylenedioxy, and mixtures thereof, or heteroarylC_{1-3}-alkyl, wherein heteroaryl is thienyl, furyl or pyridyl, each optionally substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, and mixtures thereof;

R^2 represents an optionally substituted monocyclic aromatic ring, selected from benzene, thiophene, furan, and pyridine, or an optionally substituted bicyclic ring;

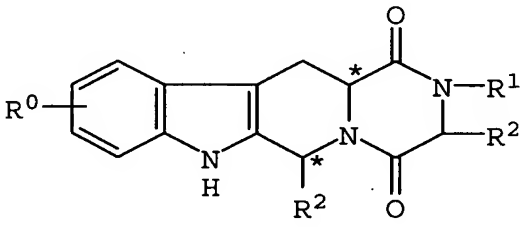


attached to the rest of the molecule via one of the benzene ring carbon atoms and wherein the fused ring A is a 5- or 6-membered ring which may be saturated or partially or fully unsaturated and comprises carbon atoms and optionally one or two heteroatoms selected from oxygen, sulfur, and nitrogen; and

R^3 represents hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl, or R^1 or R^3 together represent a 3- or 4-membered alkyl or alkenyl chain component of a 5- or 6-membered ring.

19. A method of potentiating an effect of endothelium-derived relaxing factor, a nitrovasodilator, atrial natriuretic factor, brain natriuretic peptide, a

C-type natriuretic peptide, or an endothelium-dependent relaxing agent in a human or nonhuman animal body, which comprises administering to said body a therapeutically effective amount of a compound having a formula



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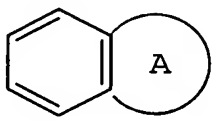
or salts or solvates thereof, in which:

R^0 represents hydrogen, halogen, or C_{1-6}alkyl;

R^1 represents hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-8}cycloalkyl, C_{3-8}cycloalkylC_{1-3}-alkyl, arylC_{1-3}alkyl, wherein aryl is phenyl or phenyl substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, methylenedioxy, and mixtures thereof, or heteroarylC_{1-3}-alkyl, wherein heteroaryl is thienyl, furyl or pyridyl, each optionally substituted with one to three substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, and mixtures thereof;

R^2 represents an optionally substituted monocyclic aromatic ring, selected from benzene, thiophene, furan, and pyridine, or an optionally substituted bicyclic ring;



attached to the rest of the molecule via one of the benzene ring carbon atoms and wherein the fused ring A is a 5- or 6-membered ring which may be saturated or partially or fully unsaturated and comprises carbon atoms and optionally one or two heteroatoms selected from oxygen, sulfur, and nitrogen; and

R^3 represents hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl, or R^1 or R^3 together represent a 3- or 4-membered alkyl or alkenyl chain component of a 5- or 6-membered ring.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the endothelium-dependent relaxing agent is bradykinin, acetylcholine, or 5-HT.--